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Original Research Article

Knowledge attitude and practice of contraceptives among married women of reproductive age group

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ABSTRACT

Background: This study was conducted to assess the knowledge, attitude and practices of contraceptives among married women of reproductive age group.
Methods: It was a cross sectional study which was carried at outpatient department (OPD) of obstetrics and gynaecology, Government medical college Srinagar over a period of 3 months. A total of 210 married women in the age group 15-49 years were included in the study. Along with the demographic profile, their knowledge, attitude and practices on contraception were evaluated with the help of self-structured questionnaire.
Results: The mean age of the study population was 32.5±6.8 years. Majority of the women were in the age group of 26-35 years (56.2%), literate with formal education above 10th class (42.4%), house-makers (46.2%) and from rural background (65.2%). 82.9% of women had awareness regarding any method of contraception. Knowledge about emergency contraceptive was quiet low (11.0%). The most common source of information on contraception was friends and relatives (64.8%). 41% of women had a negative attitude towards contraception. The most common method of contraceptive used was barriers (21.9%). 43.8% of women had never used any contraceptive.
Conclusions: Despite having good knowledge about contraception, utilization of contraceptives were less.

Keywords: Attitude, Knowledge, Practice

INTRODUCTION

Contraception is one of the key determinants of fertility and the most important predictor of fertility transition. India was the first country in the world to adopt an official population policy and launch official family planning programme way back in 1952 which remains the mainstay of family planning efforts. During its early years, the programme focussed on the health rationale of family planning.[1,2]

Family planning as a strategy for population stabilization received attention only after 1971 population census.[3] This strategy resulted in an increase in the proportion of couples effectively protected from 12.4 percent during 1971-72 to 46.5 percent during 1995-96 but remained stagnant during 1995-96 through 2003-04 and decreased to 40.4 during 2010-11. After the launch of the National Rural Health Mission in 2005, the official family planning programme has been subsumed in the reproductive and child health component of the mission.[4] However, universal adoption of small family norm still remains a distant dream in India. During 2007-08, only about 54 percent of the currently married women aged 15-49 years or their husbands were using a contraceptive method to regulate their fertility and the contraceptive prevalence rate appears to have stagnated after 2004.[5,6]

Moreover, contraceptive practice in India is known to be very heavily skewed towards terminal method's which means that contraception in India is practised primarily for birth limitation rather than birth planning.

The aim of the current study was to assess the knowledge attitude and practice of contraception among married females of reproductive age group.

METHODS

Study design

The present study was a descriptive hospital based cross-sectional study.

Study participants and settings

A total of 210 women were included in our study. The study population consisted of all the married women in the reproductive age group who attended the outpatient Department of obstetrics and gynaecology, Government medical college Srinagar over a period of 3 months from January 2020 to March 2020 who fulfilled the inclusion criteria of the study

Inclusion criteria

Those who consent. Married women in reproductive age group (15-49 years).

Exclusion criteria

Those having a serious comorbid medical disorder.

Data collection and statistical analysis

All the women were interviewed using pretested, self-administered structured questionnaires. The collected information included demographic profile, knowledge, attitude, and practice toward the use of contraceptives.

The data was entered into excel sheet and tabulated. The data was analysed using SPSS version 20.0. Categorical variables were summarized as frequency and percentage. Continuous variables were summarized as mean and standard deviation.

Ethical consideration

The study was approved by the institutional ethical committee of Government medical college Srinagar.

RESULTS

Demographic profile

Majority of our study population and were in the age range of group of 26-35 years (56.2%), having formal education above 10th class (42.4%), house makers (46.2%) and from rural background (65.2%). 8.1% of women were nulliparous and 2.9% were grand multipara with parity above 4 (Table 1).

Table 1: Demographic profile.

Variables		Number (%)
Age (years)	15-25	26 (12.4)
	26-35	118 (56.2)
	36-49	66 (31.4)
Education	Illiterate	49 (23.3)
	Primary	72 (34.3)
	10th pass	58 (27.6)
	Higher secondary	18 (8.6)
	Graduate and above	13 (6.2)
Occupation	House maker	97 (46.2)
	Student	30 (14.3)
	Employed	36 (17.1)
	Daily wager	47 (22.4)
Residence	Rural	137 (65.2)
	Urban	73 (34.8)
Parity	Nulliparous	17 (8.1)
	Para 1	49 (23.3)
	Para 2	96 (45.7)
	Para 3	29 (13.8)
	Para 4	13 (6.2)
	Grand multipara	6 (2.9)

Knowledge about contraception

82.9% of the women had awareness about contraception. Barriers were the most common method known to 80.5% of women, while as emergency contraceptives were the least known method (11.0%). About 64.8% of women got information about contraceptives form the friends and relatives (Table 2).

Table 2: Knowledge of contraception.

Variables	Number (%)
Awareness of contraception	
Yes	174 (82.9)
No	36 (17.1)
Method known	
Barriers	169 (80.5)
OCPs	146 (69.5)
IUCDS	154 (73.3)
Injectables	85 (40.5)
Sterilization	136 (64.8)
Natural methods	86 (41.0)
Emergency contraceptives	23 (11.0)
Source of information	
Friends and relatives	136 (64.8)
Media	38 (18.1)
Health professional	36 (17.1)

Attitude

46.2% of women had a positive attitude towards contraception, while as 41% had negative and 12.8% had neutral attitude towards contraception (Table 3).

Table 3: Attitude.

Attitude	Number (%)
Positive	97 (46.2)
Negative	86 (41.0)
Neutral	27 (12.8)

Practice

Barriers were the most common method used (21.9%) followed by oral contraceptives (12.4%) and natural methods (6.2%). 43.8% of women had never used any method of contraception ever (Table 4).

Table 4: Practice of contraception.

Method used	Number (%)
Barrier	46 (21.9)
OCPs	26 (12.4)
IUCD	11 (5.2)
Injectables	10 (4.8)
Sterilization	12 (5.7)
Natural methods	13 (6.2)
No method used	92 (43.8)

The most reason for not using contraceptives was lack of knowledge about contraception (48.9%) followed by hesitancy (16.3%) and partner opposition (13.9%) (Table 5).

Table 5: Reason for not using contraception.

Reason	Number (n=86) (%)
Lack of knowledge	42 (48.9)
Want another child	10 (11.6)
Partner opposition	12 (13.9)
Hesitancy	14 (16.3)
Contraception related health problems	8 (9.3)

DISCUSSION

56.2% of women were in the age group of 26-35 years and were literate (42.4%) with formal education above 10th class. The age group characteristics were similar to the study conducted by Srivastava et al but in their study nearly half of the women were illiterate. Mohanan et al in a study concluded that majority (52.4%) of the women using contraception were in the age group of 15-34 years.[7,8] A survey conducted by Donati et al concluded that the use of modern family planning methods increases with education, while female sterilization prevalence declines sharply with women's education level.[9]

In our study 64.8% had gained information from friends and relatives, 18.1% from media and 17.1% from health professionals. Srivastava et al in their study found that 70% of women had gained knowledge of contraceptives from friends and family and 39% from mass media.[7]

80.5% of our subjects knew about the barriers, 73.3% about IUCD, 69.5% about oral contraceptives and only 11% about emergency contraceptives, while as Srivastava et al in their study found that 82% were aware about female sterilization, 50% were aware of vasectomy, and IUCD was the most known (61%) temporary method followed by OC pills (60%) and condoms (50%).[7] In their study 17% were not aware of any form of contraception as against 17.1% in our study.

43.8% of women had never used any contraceptive in our study. Srivastava et al in their study found that 55% of women had never used any form of contraception which were in concordance to our findings.[7]

In our study among the users of contraceptives 21.9% of women had used a barrier method followed by OCP (12.4%) and natural methods (6.2%). Srivastav et al in their study found that 34% had used condoms, 26% natural methods and only 18% oral pills.[7]

Contraceptive usage in our study was 56.2%. The gap between awareness and practices are seen to be prevalent across different reasons, where people are aware but reluctant to practices. The most common reason for non-practice of contraception was lack of knowledge (48.9%), followed by hesitancy in using contraceptives (16.3%) and partner opposition (13.9%). Ghike et al also mentioned various for non-use of contraceptive methods.[10] The main reason 59% were pressure from family that is from husband, in-laws, son preference and physical pressure.

CONCLUSION

Our study highlights that knowledge and awareness doesn't always lead to the use of contraceptives. There is a need to educate and motivate the couples along with improvement in family planning services to promote the contraceptives.

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